AN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS

By *G. F.*

My Dear Friends,

WHose Faces are set towards *Sion*, from this Dunghilly World of Vanity and Vexation of Spirit; the Glory, Comfort and Pleasures of it pass away; they that have more or less of it, and they that enter into it, enter into Trouble; and when they are in it, it is a great Trouble to come out of it, and to be a Fool for Christ's sake, who is not of this World, but of the World that hath no end: And therefore you must believe in the Light, Grace and Truth, that cometh from him, in the Inward Parts or Heart, which directeth your Minds to Christ, from whence this

comes, and to unite to him that is Heavenly, who ſaith, *Seek the Kingdom of God firſt, and the Righteouſneſs of this Kingdom*, then all outward things will be added to them that have found the Kingdom of God, that ſtands in Righteouſneſs over Unrighteouſneſs; and it ſtands in the Power of God, over the Power of the Devil, and before he was, and it ſtandeth in Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, over all the Unclean Ghoſts or Unholy Spirits; and the good Seed are the Children of this Kingdom, which is Everlaſting.

And take heed of your Wills, and give not way to them, but give way to the Power and Spirit of God, which crucifieth it; and keep it under the Croſs of Chriſt, ſo that your Inward Man may be renewed, and the Old *Adam* put off, ſo that the Day Light of Jeſus Chriſt may be ſeen, which *Abraham* rejoyced to ſee, and ſo do they that be of the Faith of *Abraham*, the Gift of God, that ſee the Son of Righteouſneſs ſhine in their Hearts, to nouriſh that which God hath there planted, who watereth it with the living Water of the Word, his living Plant: And here is Water in your own Wells, that you may drink out of your own Wells or Ciſterns, and to have Grapes off their own Vines, from which they may have the new Wine in their new Bottles to glad and chear their Hearts with the Grapes and Wine from the Heavenly Branch of the Heavenly Vine, which the Lord doth husband; and this muſt every one of God's People feel.

For what is the matter that all the World is of ſo many Wayes ſince the Apoſtles dayes? becauſe they

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are out of Chriſt, the Way, the new and living Way, which is over all the dead ways, which was ſet up above ſixteen hundred years ago.

And why have they ſo many Religions? becauſe that they be out of the pure and undefiled Religion before God, which was ſet up above ſixteen hundred years ago, which Religion keeps from the ſpots of the World; and then this Religion muſt be above the World, that keepeth from the ſpots; and they that are gone from this Religion, into them of their own making, tell people, that *They muſt not be Perfect here*, and *muſt carry a Body of Death with them to the Grave*; and others ſay, that *They muſt have a Purgatory when they are dead:* And this Doctrine is contrary to the Apoſtles, who ſaid, that *They were cleanſed by the Blood of Jeſus, and waſhed by the Water of the Word*; and this Blood and Water God's People muſt feel within, to waſh and cleanſe their Hearts, Souls, Minds and Conſciences; *Their Hearts and Conſciences ſprinkled* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *with the Blood of Jeſus from their Dead Works, to ſerve the Living God*: for many may take of the Blood of Jeſus without them in their dead Works, not ſerving the living God, their Hearts and Conſciences being not ſprinkled with the Blood of Jeſus; and they muſt feel it within as well as without. If they have Life, they eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood, if they do live by him that is heavenly and ſpiritual, the Second *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven: For they have drunk long enough into old *Adam*'s unclean ſpirit, which is the Cauſe that they are ſo many Bodies, and do vex and quench the good Spirit, and reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhould baptize

tize them all into one Body (that is) to plunge down all Sin and Evil that is got up by Transgression, and burn that up which is Chaff or Corruption, and so to drink into one Spirit, as the Apostles and Churches did in the primitive Times, & so to have the same Fellowship and Unity in the holy Spirit of Christ as they had, to wit, in Christ Jesus, who was and is the holy Head of his Church, and his Elect in him; and *Jerusalem* that is above is the Mother of all such; and such do worship God as Christ taught above sixteen hundred years ago, in Spirit and in Truth.

So all must come to the Spirit and the Truth in their Hearts and Souls if they do know the God of Truth, who is a Spirit, and must worship him in Spirit and in the Truth, in which holy Spirit and Truth the unclean spirit and him that is out of the Truth cannot come: So all Will-worshippers, and Dragon and Beast and False Worshippers, are out of this holy Spirit and Truth in which the pure and holy God is worshipped; and as all that did eat of the Passover in the old Covenant were to be Circumcised in the Flesh, so are all in the new Covenant to be Circumcised with the Spirit, by putting off the Body of the sins of the Flesh, that came upon Man by Transgression, if they will feed on Christ their heavenly Sacrifice; for the old Covenant of Circumcision was held in the Flesh, and then they did feed upon the natural Sacrifices; but the new Covenant is held in the Grace, Light and Spirit, by which they are circumcised, and so do feed on their heavenly Sacrifice: for in the old Covenant they were not to eat the Blood of Beasts or any Blood; but in the new Covenant Christ tells you,

you, *Except ye do eat his Flesh, and do drink his Blood, you have no Life in him*: for as by *Adam* and *Eve*, their eating that which God forbad, came Death; so if *Adam* and *Eve*'s Sons and Daughters have Life again, it is by eating that which Christ commands: and as by eating came Death; so by eating cometh Life, and not by talking, no, not by talking of the Son of God; for all Reprobates may do so; for the Apostle saith, *If Christ be not in you, ye are Reprobates*; and *he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life*; and *he that hath the Son of God, hath Life*; and the Saints did confess the Son of God was come, and had given them an Understanding, and they were in him; and they were to walk as he walked, and not only to talk as he talked; for there are too many Talkers, and few Walkers in Christ, my desire is there may be more.

And the Lord God Almighty strengthen you in your inward Man, and over all give you Dominion in the Seed of Life, which bruiseth the Head of the Serpent (that brought Death and a Curse) and this Seed bringeth the Blessings, in which all Nations are blessed; and out of this Seed they are not blessed, though they may profess all the words of this good Seed; and if they be not in it, they have not the Blessing in it; and they that be in this, their Blessings and Peace flow as a River from the Rock and Foundation of Life, that standeth sure, which all the Prophets, Apostles and sanctified Ones did and do build upon, who is their Life and Salvation.

So feel the Stone that is cut out of the Mountain without hands, which must become a great Moun-

tain, and fill the whole Earth, which hath a Kingdom that is everlasting, which except a man be born again, he neither can see it, nor enter into his Kingdom.

And my Desire is, that you in your measures may be preserved to the Lord, and know what he doth require of you, to love Mercy, and to do Justly, and to walk Humbly with God; for the more the Lord giveth, the more he requires, and the less that he gives, the less he requires, who will judge the world in Righteousness according to the Gospel preached in every Creature, shewing that there is something of God in every Creature that shall answer his Judgment: And therefore my desire is, that all may be faithful to what the Lord hath made known unto them by his Grace and Truth, Light, Power & Spirit, and then the Lord will supply them with more; to whom be Glory and Praise, who is the Creator of all, through Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made; *Amen.*

G. F.

And *Dear Friends*;

MY Love to you all in the Seed of Life and Peace, which floweth as a River, & bruiseth the Head of the Serpent, that hath brought Death & Darkness, Wo, Misery and Imperfection upon and in man; & in this Seed Christ is all Nations blessed and elected, and out of it is the Curse and Reprobation; and out of this Seed are all the *false Religions, false Wayes, false Worships* and *false Churches* or *Bodies without Heads*, like so many Monsters, which the seed of the Serpent hath brought forth since the Apostles dayes, and then they have made them Heads or the Bodies or Churches; and when one is fallen off, then another they make, and set it upon the Body or Church, having lost and gone from the true Head, Christ. And

And ſometimes the Members do fall out about making a Head for their Body, ſo that the Members do deſtroy one another: Now this Monſtrous Body is brought in by this *evil ſeed* in ſuch as are gone from the Light, Grace, Truth, Power & Spirit, that cometh from Chriſt, the Heavenly Head, in whom dwelleth the fulneſs of Divinity: and they are never like to come to the true Head, Chriſt, but by coming to the Light, Grace, Truth, Power, Faith and Spirit of Jeſus, which cometh from him, and turneth to him again (the Head) and ſo to hold him their Head, by which all the Members are coupled together by Joynts & Bands, which do receive their Nouriſhment from him their Head, who doth ſupply every Member with Life everlaſting from him that is alive, and liveth for evermore.

And ſince ſuch have gone from the Light, Grace, Truth, Spirit and Power of Jeſus in this Night of Apoſtacy, they have gone from that which cometh from the Head, Chriſt, and which ſhould joyn to him. And therefore in this *night of Apoſtacy* there have been many *Bodies* without the true *Head*, which have made ſo many *Heads*, and ſet them upon their *Bodies*, and when *they* are gone, they do make *more*; and the Beaſt, Dragon, Wolves and Falſe Worſhips or Bodies, without the true Head, Chriſt, being out of the Grace, Truth, Light, Power, Faith and Spirit which the Apoſtles were in, they have brought forth ſo many monſtrous Bodies without Heads, till they have made Heads for them; and when one is gone, they do make another. And therefore all muſt come to the Grace, Truth, Power, Spirit and Faith that cometh from Jeſus, if that they do come to Jeſus from whence it cometh, and ſo hold him their Head, which Head all things were made by, ſo is Firſt and Laſt, Beginning and Ending; *Halelujah*.

And my deſires are, that all may be in their ſervices for Chriſt, Men and Women, in his Grace, Truth, Light, Power and Spirit, that from him they may all have their *Penney*, who doth reward every Man and Woman according to their Works, and not ſtand idle chaffering in the Market-place.

So with my Love in the Lord, the Creator of all, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom was all, and is over all, the Firſt and Laſt, a living Rock and Foundation for all the Living to build

upon that are quickned by him, & do believe in his Light, which is the Life in Christ, the *Word, by whom all things were made*, and so are grafted into Christ, the *living Tree, that never withereth*; and so from him the *green Tree* every Graft doth receive its *nourishment*, that is grafted into him; and so the living *Root* doth bear every branch, and nourishes it, that it may bring forth Fruit to the Praise of God over all, blessed forever.

And this is the *Tree whose Leaf never fadeth, nor Fruit faileth; but its Fruit feedeth all the Living, and the Leaves thereof heal the Nations:* and this *Tree* stands in the midst of God's Garden, who saith, *In the midst of thy Church will I sing Praise*, which are living Stones, a spiritual Houshold of Faith, Elect and Precious, the Church of the living God, written in Heaven; so *Holiness becomes the House of the Lord*. And therefore the Lord doth require more from *Friends* than all other people, because he hath given more to them; and so all people do expect more from *Friends* than all other people, in answering that of God in them all in Truth and in Righteousness, Holiness and Godliness; for *ye are the Lights of the World, and the Salt of the Earth to season it*: so all must glorifie the Lord God in their Lives & Conversations with their Bodies, Spirits & Souls, which are Christ's, who has bought them and cleansed them with his Blood and the pure Water of his Word, who makes them sanctified Vessels of his Mercy for his Glory; therefore none must dishonour the Lord.

And therefore my Desires are, that you may all be valiant for the Truth upon the Earth; and keep up all your Men and Women's Meetings in the Lord's Power, the Gospel, which hath brought Life and Immortality to light, and it will preserve you in Life and in Immortality over him that hath darkned you; and in this all will see their Work and Services for the Lord God and his Son Christ Jesus, in that which hath brought Life and Immortality to light, which *Gospel* is an *everlasting perfect Fellowship* and *Order*, which will stand when all others are gone; all the Saints that do enjoy this, cannot but praise the Lotd, and sing Praises to him forever and ever, *Amen*.

G F.

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THe Apoſtle ſaith, *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17.

So they that are in Chriſt, are new creatures; and they that be in old *Adam*, are old creatures, and are in their old things, old Wayes, old Worſhips and old Religions, and have the old Garments, and are the old Bottles, that hold the old Wine, and cannot endure the new; and have the old, ruſty, moth eaten Treaſure. And they that be in Chriſt, the heavenly and ſpiritual ſecond *Adam*, who maketh all things new, are new creatures, and ſpiritual men, and heavenly-minded, and are new Bottles, that hold the new Wine and the new heavenly Treaſure, and have the new Cloathing, the fine Linnen, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and are in the new and living Way, over all the dead Wayes; and they are in the new Worſhip, which Chriſt ſet up above 1600. years ago, which is in the Spirit and in the Truth, in which holy Spirit and holy Truth the holy God is worſhipped; and this was new to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and it is new to all the apoſtate *Chriſtians*, which are not in the holy Spirit and Truth that the Apoſtles were in. And this new creature in Chriſt hath a new Religion, which is pure and undefiled, and keepeth from the Spots of the World: and this Religion is new to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and all the apoſtatized *Chriſtians* that plead for a Body of death and ſin to the Grave, and a Purgatory when they are dead. And they that be in Chriſt are new Creatures, and they have a new Head, who is the Head of allthings, the firſt born of every Creature, and the firſt begotten from the dead, who is alive, and liveth for evermore, who bruiſeth the Serpent's head, who hath made things old, but Chriſt maketh all things new; and they that be in him, are new Creatures; & they that be out of Chriſt, be the old Creatures in old *Adam*, and theſe old Creatures are doting about their old things, and their old Bottles, old Wine, old Garments, and are doting about their old Wayes, old Religions and old Worſhips, and perſecuting one another with their old carnal

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Weapons, these old Creatures, which dote about their old Worships, Religions and Wayes; so that one old Creature falleth out with another old Creature, so that these old doting Creatures in old *Adam*, out of Christ the second *Adam*, do wrestle with flesh and blood about their old Wayes, Religions and Worships: And these old doting Creatures (which be out of Christ the Saviour) do destroy one another about their old Wayes, Worships, Religions and Churches: And these old Creatures, that be out of Christ the Head, are Monstrous Bodies without a Head, till that they have made one, and then the old Creatures set it upon their Body, which Head (as the old Creatures think) doth pardon their Sins; and when this their Head is fallen off their Body, then they do make another, and set it on their old Creature's Body: But they that are in Christ, are new Creatures, and Christ is their Head, who is their Redeemer, Sanctifier & Saviour, who is alive, and liveth for evermore, and walk in Christ, the second *Adam*, who is heavenly and spiritual. And the old Creatures, out of Christ, their Walk is in old *Adam*, who is natural and carnal; and so that old Creature's Weapons and Armour, that he defendeth his old Ways, Church, Religion and Worship with, are carnal (and not Spiritual) by which they kill one another; and the old Creatures do study or dote which way they may destroy or imprison, persecute or banish, spoil or torture the Righteous or new Creatures in Christ. And they that be in Christ are new Creatures, their Weapons and Armour are spiritual, and they do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but spiritual wickedness and rulers of darkness in high places, and bring down imaginations and high thoughts, as Christ (whom those new creatures are in) teacheth them, who saith, that *He came not to destroy mens lives, but to save them*; and rebuked such as would have had mens Lives destroyed, and told them, that *they did not know what Spirit they were of:* So it is clear, that the old creatures, that be out of Christ, which destroy mens Lives about their old Wayes, Churches, Religions, and their old Worships, do not know what spirit they are of; and therefore if they do not know what Spirit they are of, whether it be a good spirit or a bad one, they do not know, and yet people must conform to that Way,

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Religion, Worſhip and Church that this old creature, that is out of Chriſt, hath ſet up, or elſe he will perſecute them or deſtroy their Lives, though Chriſt ſaith, *they do not know what ſpirit they are of:* And is not this hard, to conform to that which the old creatures have made and ſet up, which do not know their own ſpirits, nor what ſpirit they be of? And therefore were not thoſe Doctrines, Ordinances, Traditions and Rudiments of the world the old creatures, which they did and do dote after, which the new creatures in Chriſt Jeſus were not to taſte, touch nor to handle, for they did periſh with the uſing? And are not all the Will-worſhips, and the Beaſts and Dragons Worſhips, the old creatures, that be out of Chriſt, bearing the Mark of the Beaſt in their Hand or Forehead? And they that be in Chriſt, which be new creatures, have their Fathers Mark or Name in their Fore-heads, and worſhip the Holy, Pure and Living God in Spirit and in Truth. And it was the old creatures that made Images and Idols, and ſuch make them now, and worſhip them: But they that are in Chriſt, are new creatures, and are renewed up into the Image of God, and worſhip him in his holy Spirit and Truth, God that liveth forever, *Amen.*

And theſe cannot touch, taſte nor handle the old creatures Images, Idols, Doctrines, Ordinances, Traditions or Rudiments of the World, which are the old creatures, in old *Adam,* which doth touch, taſte and handle them: but the new creature cannot, who is in Chriſt, the expreſs Image of the Father; and he maketh his new creatures like himſelf. *Moſes* made *Servants of God* in the Law or old Teſtament, but *Chriſt* made Sons in the new Teſtament; for *as many as received Chriſt, he gave them power to become the Sons of God.*

Swarthmore, in *Lancaſhire,*
the 30th of the 11th
Moneth, 1678.

G. F.

THE END.